

WIC

The Virginia Department of Health, Division of WIC and Community Nutrition Services is pleased to announce the latest member of our staff that will be assisting us with the planning and development of offering WIC services in hospitals with the hopes of decreasing infant mortality. Crista Galvin-Cox, MS, RD has an extensive background in pediatric and women's nutrition. Crista will start with learning the ins and outs of the WIC program to include all the processes in the clinics. Next, she will begin researching the top five Medicaid hospitals in the Commonwealth to determine the best fit for a pilot program.

We will provide updates as the program progresses. If you have questions or suggestions, please contact her at Crista.Galvin-Cox@vdh.virginia.gov.

Reducing Infant Mortality—Public Health Detailing Project Summary (2009)

A survey was written and sent out to approximately 150 health care providers in OB GYN offices throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. This survey was an effort to gauge the level of nutrition education that patients are receiving from their physicians during any of their typical prenatal appointments. Thirty-five of the surveys were completed and returned. Based on the responses, 80% of the providers spent zero to five minutes initiating conversation with the patient to discuss the importance of nutrition during pregnancy. While 86% responded that they are in fact familiar with the WIC program, about 49% of those do not make referrals to the program. A great number of pregnant women who are eligible for the WIC program and in need of its resources are unaware of the benefits. To combat this, WIC plans to implement a public health detailing program that will attempt to remedy this problem.

Registered Dietitians or other trained staff will visit women's physicians to inform them about the WIC program's capabilities and improve the level of nutrition education patients receive during a prenatal appointment. Tool kits will be given to health care providers and will include resources for physicians, patients and clinical tools. Also the physician tool kit will include a letter from Health Commissioner Karen Remley stressing the importance of this project and information about how to order more materials and contact the WIC dietitian representing their area.

The patient education will be presented in the form of a smaller tool kit and will include nutrition facts during pregnancy, a postcard outlining WIC services and the closest local agency with contact information.

The State WIC office is currently in the process of hiring the lead dietitian for this project.